

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 14, 2009

The Honorable Ron Kirk
United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Re: Ecuador's Inclusion in Andean Trade Preferences Benefits

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

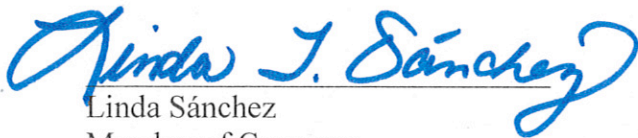
We are writing to express our concern about news reports indicating that Chevron Corporation continues to request that the United States Trade Representative (USTR) withhold U.S. trade preferences for Ecuador. We understand that this request arises as part of an effort to quiet a legal claim brought against Chevron by some 30,000 Ecuadorians who reside in Ecuador's northeastern Amazon region. We urge you to reject Chevron's request and reaffirm that U.S. trade agreements will not be used as leverage to interfere in private claims progressing through Ecuador's legal process.

For nearly four years, Chevron Corporation has made similar requests of the United States Trade Representative's Office (USTR). To its credit, USTR has rejected them. A judgment is expected sometime next year by the Ecuadorian court in a civil case in which the Ecuadorian plaintiffs allege that Texaco, subsequently acquired by Chevron dumped billions of gallons of toxic waste water into unlined pits and waterways in Ecuador's Amazon forests while drilling for oil, resulting in severe human health and environmental problems in the region.


We do not prejudge the outcome of the case, nor do we take a position on the litigation. We do believe, however, that the tens of thousands of indigenous residents of Ecuador who have brought this case deserve their day in court. We further believe that the USTR should not interfere in an ongoing judicial matter, particularly when this case involves environmental, health and human right issues that have regional, and even global, importance.

We appreciate your consideration of our request that you continue your past policy of allowing the case against Chevron to unfold without pressure from the USTR. We look forward to hearing from you soon. Should you have any questions on this matter, please contact Celeste Drake in the office of Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez at celeste.drake@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Linda Sánchez
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



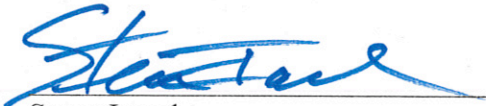
Bill Delahunt
Member of Congress



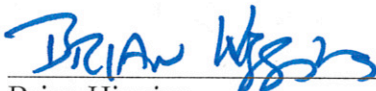
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



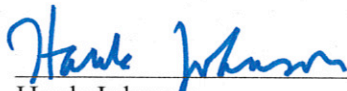
Danny Davis
Member of Congress



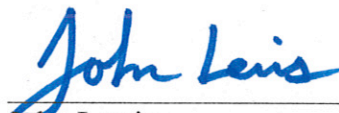
Steve Israel
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



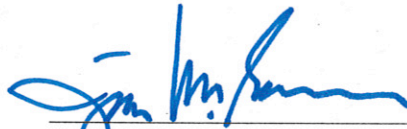
Michael Michaud
Member of Congress



James Moran
Member of Congress



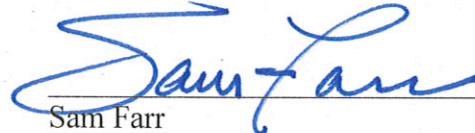
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



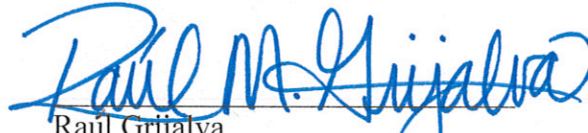
Jim McGovern
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Sam Farr
Member of Congress




Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress



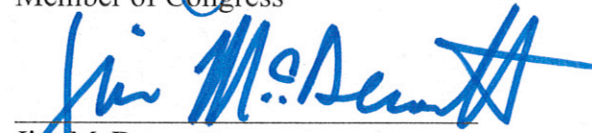
Phil Hare
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



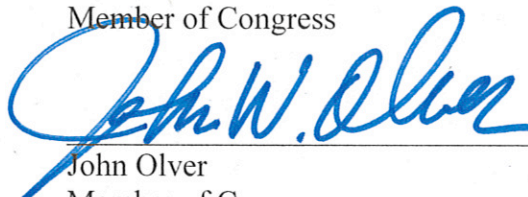
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



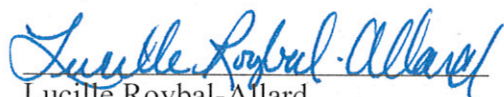
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



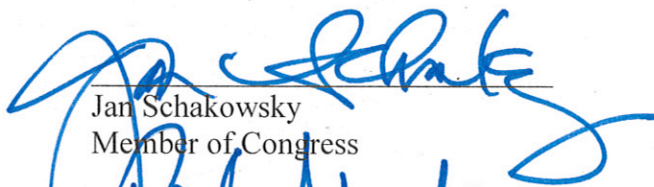
John Olver
Member of Congress



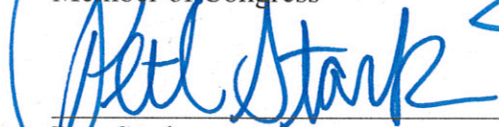
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Betty Sutton
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Pete Stark
Member of Congress

